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141731Z Jan 05

UNCLAS MADRID 000169

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STATE PASS USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: <u>EAID AEMR PGOV</u> <u>SP</u>
SUBJECT: GOS BOOSTS TSUNAMI AID TO EUR 9.3 MILLION

REF: A. MADRID 149

¶B. MADRID 105

 $\P1$. The MFA announced January 13 an increase of Spanish humanitarian aid to Southeast Asian countries affected by the tsunami to EUR 9.3 million (USD 12.2 million). This number

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is in addition to Spain's pledge of EUR 50 million (USD 65.5 million) in reconstruction credits. The MFA press release indicates the decision to increase aid was made while Foreign Minister Moratinos and Secretary of State for International Assistance were visiting Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia to witness the tsunami,s effects first hand.

- $\P 2$. The funds that will be disbursed by the Spanish Aid Agency (AECI) include three components. NGO's focusing on emergency action and reconstruction will receive EUR 3 million (USD 3.9 million). Multilateral institutions, primarily UN agencies, will receive EUR 2 million (USD 2.6 million). The GOS will continue to send direct flights of humanitarian aid to the region, which is predicted to reach EUR 4.3 million (USD 5.6 million).
- 13. Comment. The increase in Spanish aid announced after the Foreign Minister's trip to the tsunami region confirms this government's commitment to the victims of the disaster and a robust humanitarian aid program. MANZANARES